DOCTOR WHO

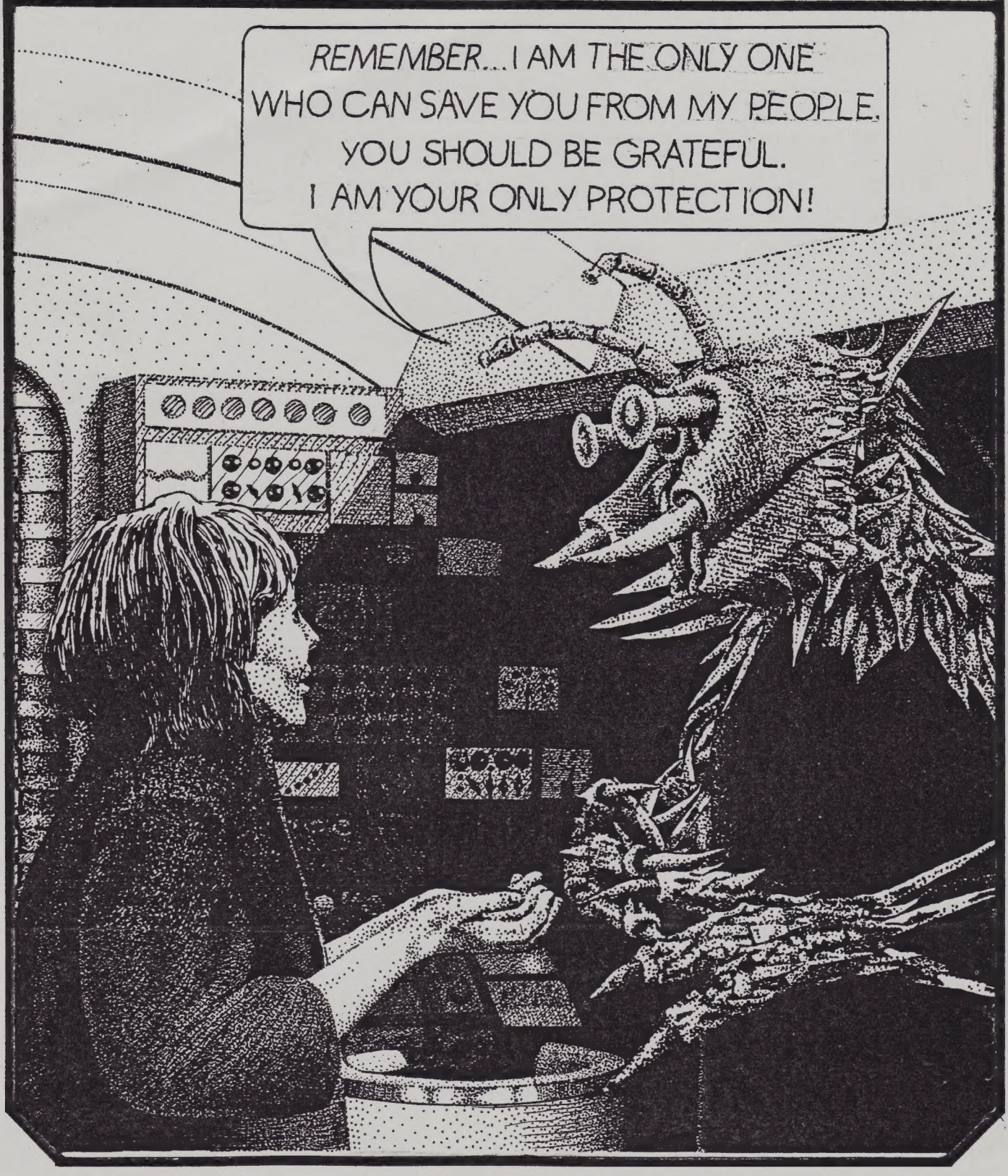
SERIAL L

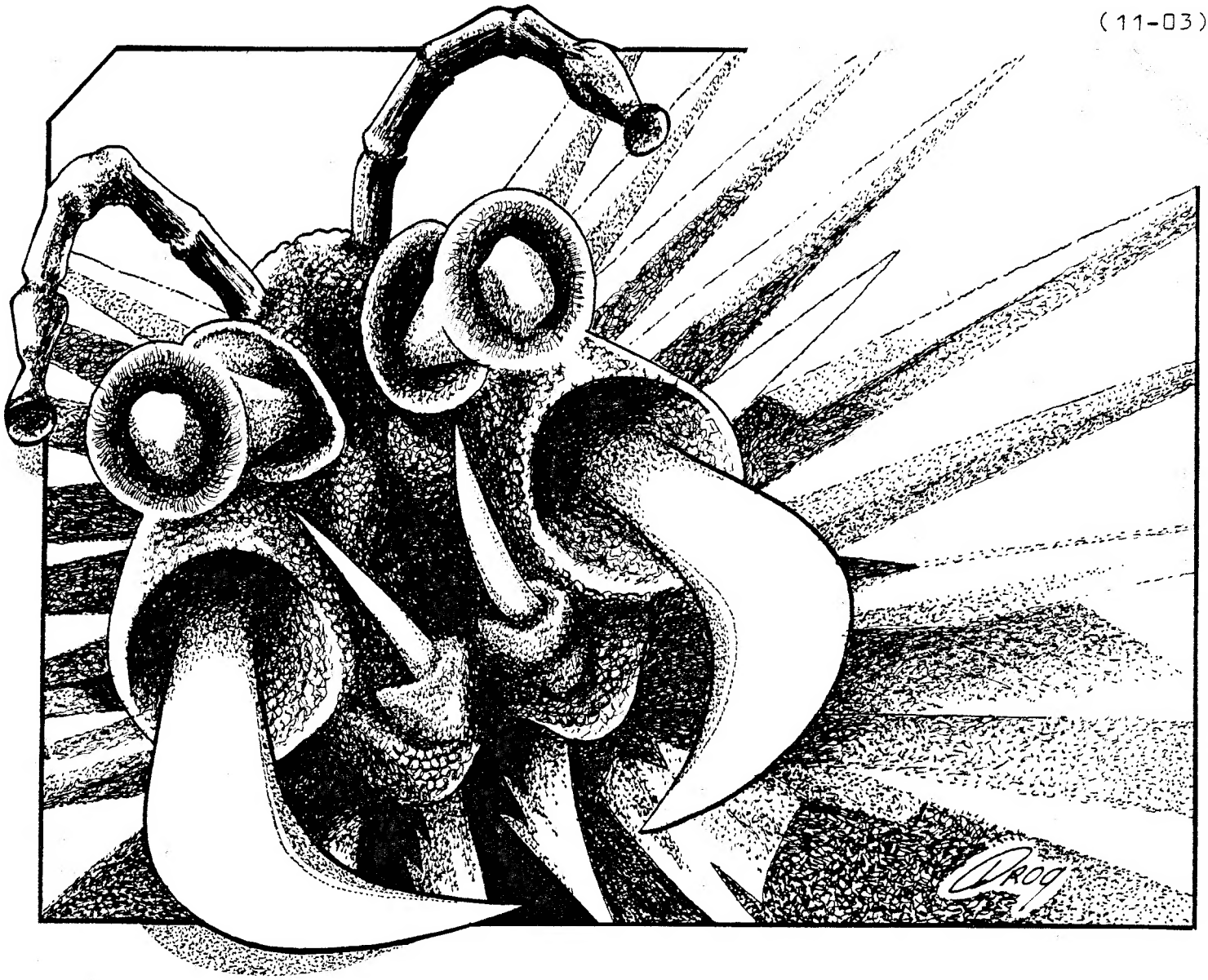
The Rescue

BY

DAVID WHITAKER

An Adventure in Space & Time





The awkward silence in the TARDIS after Susan's departure is broken when the ship materialises on the mountainous planet Dido. Ian and Barbara step out of the vessel without the Doctor, and soon discover a crashed Earth spaceship. Before they can return to tell the Doctor, however, a hostile creature named Koquillion confronts them, promptly burying Ian beneath a rockfall and causing Barbara to topple off a cliff ledge.

Barbara is rescued by one of the two inhabitants of the Earth ship, a young orphan named Vicki, who tells her that Koquillion is a Didonian who protects her and her fellow survivor, a crippled man named Bennett, but will not allow them to stray from the ship whilst they await the imminent arrival of an Earth rescue vessel.

The Doctor, meanwhile, finds Ian and sets off with him to locate Barbara's whereabouts. Vicki is angry at Barbara for having killed her pet, a docile, vegetarian Sand Beast, whom Barbara thought was going to attack the young girl. Quite soon, the Doctor and Ian arrive, and whilst the Doctor decides to talk with Bennett in his private quarters, the two schoolteachers tell a fascinated Vicki about themselves, the Doctor and the TARDIS.

The Doctor soon suspects that somehow Bennett's suspicious behaviour is connected to Koquillion, and is not surprised to find Bennett missing from his cabin. Added to this, there is a recurring taped message announcing: "You can't come in!", and a secret tunnel going from the cabin to an underground cave system. By the time Ian, Barbara and Vicki realise the Doctor has vanished, he has already arrived in Koquillion's hideout...

There, in the Hall of Judgement of the peaceful peoples of Dido, the Doctor puts the final pieces of the puzzle together, and waits to unmask the true villain.

DRAMA EXTRACT

The ancient mists swirling about the pillars and galleries of the subterranean cathedral muffled, but could not quieten, the rasping of Koquillion's footfalls on the flagstones as the green-robed spectre advanced to the circular table before which the Doctor was standing, unruffled and as impassive as ever.

Hearing the footsteps stop some feet behind him, the Doctor spoke. "This used to be the People's Hall of Judgement. Fitting in the present circumstances, don't you think?" The Doctor turned, regarding his quilled adversary with cold and unrelenting eyes. "Mister Bennett, may I remind you that masks and robes such as you are wearing are only used on absolutely ceremonial occasions, hmm?"

For a moment Koquillion did not move; then, putting down the jewelled club, he reached up and pulled at the ornamental head-dress. Bennett's craggy, bearded face emerged from beneath the mask, furious at the Doctor for guessing his deception. "Have you finished?" he scowled.

The Doctor nodded amiably. "Yes, I had hoped that you would continue. This elaborate plan must have been conceived for some reason. What?"

"To save my life," Bennett answered plainly. With his masquerade at an end Bennett began removing the rest of his Didonian trappings, yet his hostile gaze never shifted from the Doctor as he continued to explain - confident that no other ears would ever hear it. "I killed a crew member on the spaceship to Astra. I was arrested. The ship crashed. My crime hadn't been radioed to Earth. I knew that if I could get rid of the other crew members..."

Bennett's narrative paused and he began to edge towards his inquisitor. Noting this the Doctor retreated, trying to keep the bulk of the table between himself and the insane killer. Hoping to distract him the Doctor continued the story. "...Get rid of the other crew members and blame their deaths on the Dido people, hmm?"

"When we crash landed," Bennett responded, a slight maniac quaver creeping into his tone, "the inhabitants invited us all to a grand meeting. It was simple. I just arranged an explosion using the ship's armaments. The whole thing went up - all the inhabitants, the crew, the whole race!"

Anger blazed in the Doctor's eyes. "You destroyed a whole planet to save your own skin!" he stormed. "You're insane!"

"The girl didn't know I'd been arrested. When we get back to Earth she'd support my story. I dressed up as Koquillion to show her how terrible the people here were."

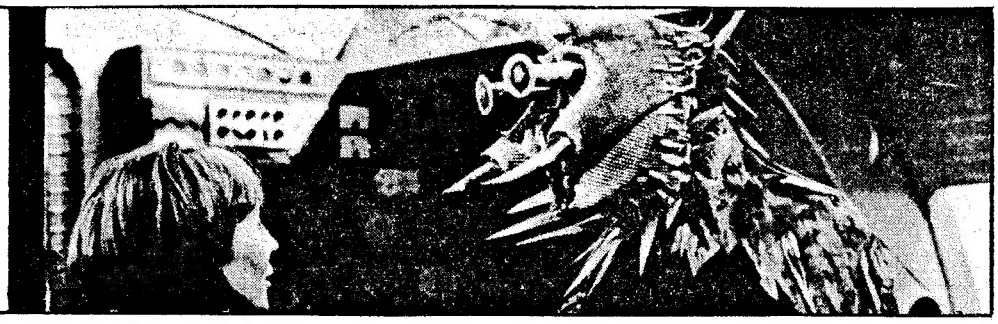
Realising that Bennett was quite mad and almost certainly intent upon killing him, a plan had formed in the Doctor's mind, but it needed a few more seconds' diversion. "If that happened, your guilt would have been hidden forever, hmm?"

"If it happened?" Bennett smiled evilly. "Nothing's changed. There are only three more people for Koquillion to kill, that's all."

Suddenly the Doctor's hand shot out and grabbed the jewel club, but before he could bring it to bear, Bennett had seized his wrist. There was a flash, a momentary whine of power and then a rumbling explosion. Part of the ceiling masonry crumbled under the ray's impact and crashed to the ground, sending dust and flying debris billowing into the chamber. The Doctor released his hold on the club and reached for a ceremonial sword resting atop an altar case; but Bennett, perceiving the Doctor's intention, caught the blow with a small wooden stool. Now the advantage was his. The Doctor turned to flee, but in seconds Bennett had knocked him against the altar steps and had seized his throat in a death-like grip.

STORY REVIEW

PAUL MOUNT



How can you possibly follow a serial of such epic, grandiose proportions as 'The Dalek Invasion of Earth', a story which not only reintroduced the creatures which had created such a public stir when they made their first appearance in the second story of the first season, but also saw the beginning of the dissolution of the original 'Doctor Who' travelling team, with the emotional exit of Susan Foreman, more than capably played for the duration by Carole Ann Ford?

The answer, quite simply, is that you can't; at least, not with anything like the same amount of success or exuberance. 'The Rescue' is often dismissed as being just a cheap two-part filler - best forgotten - but the truth of the matter is that there is more to it than the title suggests - not much more, it's true - but the story really isn't the weak and watery non-event it is often thought to be.

The story concerns itself basically with introducing us to the girl destined to become Susan's replacement aboard the TARDIS, Vicki, played by young actress Maureen O'Brien. 'The Rescue' is possibly Vicki's finest hour, and that really isn't saying a great deal for her! She is introduced in the very first scene, as she stamps across the cabin of the crippled spaceship to answer the signal emanating from the radio instruments and, even in this earliest sequence, there is something faintly irritating about her manner and appearance. Some attempt seems to be made to paint a thumbnail sketch of a character for Vicki in her debut, but the memory of Susan is too strong, and comparisons, though odious, are unavoidable. Susan existed as a separate entity from the Doctor, Ian and Barbara throughout her tenure, whilst Vicki exists solely as a face - I hesitate to say 'character' - for the younger viewers to identify with. As previously mentioned, she is moderately successful in 'The Rescue', with her little outburst against Barbara soon after the latter has accidentally killed her tame Sand Beast pet and subsequent refusal to accept or even speak to Barbara coming over very well. There is also something quite appealing in her disbelieving manner when Ian and Barbara tell her of their origins; but the final impression of Vicki given by 'The Rescue' fails to promise much for her future within 'Doctor Who'.

The 'plot' thickens with the introduction of Bennett, the only survivor of the disaster on the planet Dido which, according to Bennett, was caused by the Didonians, killing all the other humans. Bennett is sinister and untrustworthy from the very start, and it isn't really difficult to guess that he and the villain of the piece, Koquillion, are somehow connected, if not even the same person. Koquillion itself, the latest 'Doctor Who' monster of the time - still a new and relatively untried breed - was a suitably impressive, tall, spiky creature with a humanoid voice and a threatening manner, which was apparently terrorising young Vicki and keeping her from straying too far from the ship. Whilst its first appearance, emerging from behind the newly-arrived TARDIS in the caves, soon after Ian and Barbara have wandered off to explore, is quite eerie, its subsequent appearance, stepping out of the shadows to confront the two humans, is devoid of tension as there has been no real build up of tension or mystery around the creature's purpose or identity. The feeling always clings with Koquillion that not only do we <u>know</u> it is a man in a suit, but we are <u>meant</u> to suspect that it is a man in a suit. The 'suit' does manage to provide the only really memorable moment in the serial, during the final episode, when the Doctor, before the shrine

in the underground Didonian chamber, a large and very impressive set which would not be expected of such a nondescript story, is patiently waiting, and Koquillion advances slowly down the steps behind him. Very chilling and atmospheric. Indeed, this sequence shows a startlingly athletic Doctor, as he indulges in violent physical combat with Koquillion/Bennett, now revealed as one and the same man. This battle leads to the rather unsatisfying conclusion wherein two Didonians mysteriously appear from nowhere and, terrified, Bennett plunges over a cliff to his death. All very well, but...why? Where did the Didonians come from, and why didn't they say anything?

The change in the Doctor is by now becoming quite marked. The spry, lively old man of the first season is, with the exception of the aforementioned sequence, fast becoming replaced by the 'crotchety old man' image generally associated with William Hartnell. His first appearance is rather unusual to say the least, as we actually see him asleep whilst the TARDIS materialises in the caves. A sign of things to come under the jurisdiction of new story editor Dennis Spooner is suggested by the strong vein of humour running through the introductory scenes with the Doctor, Ian and Barbara; especially in the sequence with Ian and Barbara venturing from the TARDIS to explore, leaving the Doctor inside. The two schoolteachers speculate about how the Doctor seems to be ageing, and even as Ian dares to suggest that he may even be going "a bit senile", the door opens and the Doctor appears with "I can hear every word you're saying, you know". However, there is still pathos present, as it is obvious that the departed Susan is still uppermost in the Doctor's mind, particularly in part one when he accidentally speaks to her in the TARDIS, momentarily forgetting that she isn't there any more. His eagerness to bring Vicki aboard suggests a strangely human side to his character, with a need to replace the irreplaceable Susan with another young girl over whom he can fuss.

Visually and aurally, 'The Rescue' rarely rises above the average. With music and sound effects pilfered almost directly from 'The Daleks', there is no imagination shown in the sound department, but visually the story is still quite impressive. The opening shot of the spaceship, rent asunder by its crash, lying in a valley, its radar dish spinning, is particularly good, and the sloping interiors of the ship are very well thought out and designed, if a bit functional. Vicki's pet, the Sand Beast, isn't all that impressive, and it's difficult to believe in it for a moment; but its unfortunate death, and Vicki's response to it, are strangely emotive, and even if the viewer remains unaffected, it's easy to understand Vicki's reaction.

The greatest sin committed by 'The Rescue' is that it followed 'The Dalek Invasion of Earth', and in that respect it was doomed to failure from the start, doomed to be forgotten by the lingering memory of images of the Daleks patrolling their conquered Earth. 'The Rescue' serves as a sort of pillar on which the legend of 'Doctor Who' is built - the sort of story which has to exist to enable the true classics to be - and in that way, with its preceding story, it shows quite admirably the two levels on which 'Doctor Who' can operate - the spectacular and the positively mundane. Isolated, its strengths and weaknesses, which just about balance it out, are laid bare, and it serves as a perfect example of 'Doctor Who' at its most average.

DOCTOR WHO - AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE AND TIME

SERIES EDITOR...TIM ROBINS
DEPUTY EDITOR.GARY HOPKINS
ARTWORK..STUART GLAZEBROOK
TONY CLARK
GORDON LANGDEN

WRITERS.....JEREMY BENTHAM
GARY HOPKINS
PAUL MOUNT
JOHN PEEL

'DOCTOR WHO' copyright: BBC

CHARACTER PROFILES.

"VICKI" BY PAUL MOUNT AND TIM ROBINS

It was a brave, but perhaps a rather foolhardy, move to try and replace Carole Ann Ford's Susan Foreman with another "juvenile lead" after the former's departure from 'Doctor Who'. The concept of the companion has always been vital to the series, and now, with the Doctor being accompanied only by the rather older Ian and Barbara, a younger figure for the children in the audience to identify with was felt necessary.

So came about Vicki, an eighteen-year-old 'space castaway', if you like, stranded on the planet Dido after her spaceship had crashed. Her introductory story, 'The Rescue', was just that, a story revolving around the girl destined to become the new travelling companion for the Doctor, and her discovery and rescue by the TARDIS crew. It was not an auspicious start for the girl, who appeared at once to be a much weaker character than her often fascinating predecessor. For much of the time, Vicki had all the impact of putty on concrete, and the attempt to create a real, identifiable girl never really came off. The character, with her rather insipid manner, never managed to amount to anything during her nine-story run. For her first few stories she stuck closely to the more experienced Doctor; so closely, in fact, that he only narrowly avoided elbowing her! However, the Doctor seemed to take an instant shine to her, if only for the fact that she was, in appearance, more or less the same age as his already sadly missed grand-daughter. Perhaps it was a sign of the Doctor's growing senility that he even accepted her as a replacement for Susan in the first place.

Vicki was a character who ultimately failed to achieve what she was created to do; to become a figure with whom the youth of the viewing public could identify; and there are, we feel, two reasons for this. As already mentioned, the character didn't develop enough, and eventually became just a "screamer". This became the stereotype of the 'Doctor Who' companions (and a fatal mistake when creating companion figures for the Doctor). As she was basically rooted in the far future, in that she originated in the Twenty-fifth Century, she was distanced from the average mid-Sixties young viewer, a fact perfectly exemplified by her lack of knowledge of the Beatles in 'The Chase' (serial "R"). Like others after her, Vicki came across as something of an 'alien', but she was possibly one of the least successful of all the travelling companions of the Doctor.

One of the main impressions of her in the series is of a somewhat emotionally unstable young girl. She seemed given to outbursts of alternating raucous laughter and screaming hysteria. What was worse, it was often difficult to distinguish which of these two emotions she was treating us to. A good example of this was in the first episode of 'The Chase', when a trap door in the sand of Aridius opens mysteriously. Vicki is seen running towards it with a gurgling shriek, collapsing beside it with a fit of giggles. Just prior to this she had recounted a ludicrous story about castles and chains in the middle of a field, making Earth in the Twenty-fifth Century sound like Disneyland! However, she never really convinces anyone she is from the far distant future, despite frequent references to it.

For Maureen O'Brien, a 21 year-old Liverpudlian, Vicki was her first television part. She had turned to acting only after toying with the idea of teaching it, but in later years was to bemoan her

role in 'Doctor Who'. She has been quoted as saying that Vicki all but ruined her acting career, simply by giving her too little to do in the series. The truth of the matter was that there was precious little meat to the part.

Maureen O'Brien has since played many superb character parts in numerous TV programmes, but it has to be said that, as far as her acting in 'Doctor Who' was concerned, it was at best pitiful, and at worst embarrassing. It was a terrible shame that Vicki's inauguration into 'Doctor Who' was less of an event than it should have been, but it was a sign of things to come. The companions' lot would rarely improve for some time afterwards. It was just unfortunate that Vicki arrived now.

"KOQUILLION" BY JOHN PEEL

Imposing, awesome, ferocious in appearance, Koquillion matches his spiked, evil exterior with a dark soul. "He just keeps us here, Bennett and me," Vicki tells Barbara, for his own hidden reasons. She sees the creature as a vicious killer, lying to them, yet preserving them. She plays to this facade mostly, but loses her temper with him, and reveals her true feelings when he tells her that "his people" have killed the TARDIS' crew. "I bet you never gave them a chance!" she yells. In his evil, squeaky whisper, Koquillion replies: "Remember, I am the only one who can save you from my people! You should be grateful! I am your only protection!" Armed with a jewelled club that projects a blasting ray (used by the Didonians in blasting work), he is also aided by his uncanny knowledge of events where he isn't present. "He knows everything - everything!" Vicki sobs to Barbara.

This is, of course, all merely a charade. Koquillion is born in the diseased mind of Bennett, invented to fool Vicki. Whilst this game can be played on an impressionable child, it cannot fool the Doctor for a moment, especially since he has been here before. "I don't understand it," he comments to Ian. "Violence is totally alien to people on this planet! When I was here before, the total population amounted to a handful of people - no more than a hundred...All the more reason for holding onto life. Peace, friendship, happiness - this means everything to the people here." So how could they have changed?

Bennett is an arrogant, rude and abrasive man, easily angered and furious when crossed. Barbara views him very suspiciously on their first meeting, and the Doctor rapidly adds together a series of clues to arrive at his guilt - a tape recording of "You can't come in", rigged to Bennett's door; an empty passageway beneath his locked cabin; and the ceremonial clothes of the Didonians...He travels via Bennett's own escape route, and awaits the killer in the Hall of Judgement.

Once the confrontation has ended in Bennett's death, however, the Doctor is taken back to the safety of the TARDIS. There are survivors of the Didonian race, and not surprisingly they wish to have nothing more to do with alien visitors. To this end they wreck the crashed Earth-ship completely. "And somehow," the Doctor remarks, "I don't think they'll allow that rescue ship to land." Now surly and suspicious of outsiders, the Didonians wish to dwell alone and in peace on their desolate planet, remembering the dead that an alien madman slew...

Bennett's co-survivor, Vicki, has little choice for her future. She can remain on the planet, and at the mercy of the Didonians, with no hope of rescue from her own planet; or she can join the Doctor and his two friends in the TARDIS, where the risk of danger is greater, but where she will at least find security and welcome company. She makes her decision with little hesitation, and the TARDIS has four occupants once again.

TECHNICAL OBSERVATIONS

'The Rescue' is set towards the end of the 25th. Century, as intimated by Vicki's remarks to Ian and Barbara about their relative ages in episode two.

First story to feature a studio materialisation of the full-size TARDIS prop.

Crashed spaceship (serial registration number 201) was a rocket-shaped model with the hull cracked open in the middle. A small motor hidden inside the model turned a radio dish aerial positioned on a pylon above the craft.

Interior of the crashed ship re-used some of the scenery from Maitland's spacecraft in 'The Sensorites' (serial "G"). The cameras filming the interior were tilted slightly to give an impression of the ship resting at an angle, sloping away from the split in the centre of the hull.

Episode one's credits attributed Koquillion as being portrayed by actor Sydney Wilson. This was, in fact, a pseudonym to disguise the major plot revelation in episode two that Bennett was Koquillion. Actor Ray Barrett played both parts in each episode. The name 'Sydney Wilson' was made up from a blending of the two BBC Department Heads, Sydney Newman and Donald Wilson.

A split-screen glass-shot process was used for scenes of the companions looking down at the crashed rocket from the mountainside.

Tristram Cary's radiophonic score of mood effects from 'The Daleks' (serial "B") was used again for this story.

A horizontal split-screen effect was used to give the impression of the Doctor and Ian being on a ledge high above a chasm containing the Sand Beast. In fact, the ledge was just a foot off the ground and was glimpsed as such in the first episode's opening as the TARDIS materialised.

A relief mural of a Dido ceremonial mask (as worn by Koquillion) was the centre-piece for the cliffhanger to episode one. Various sets of blades emerged from recesses in the mural, firstly to trap Ian and then secondly to prod him over the ledge. Other murals of the mask were seen adorning the walls and tables in the Hall of Judgement.

The actual Koquillion mask, claws and talons were ceremonial representations of the Sand Beast creatures. The creatures themselves were bipeds and a cross between a lizard and a snake, propelling themselves along by their two front legs.

The Didonians seen at the end of episode two were stockily built humanoids dressed in white uniforms, topped by short, cape-like arrangements.

The "Power Off" facility of the TARDIS was demonstrated for the first time in this story where, by throwing a switch on the console, the Doctor could turn off the interior hum of the ship.

The Koquillion costume was bottle-green in colour.

A model set of a tree-lined mountain path was made for the climax to episode two as the TARDIS lands within the ancient Roman Empire and topples from a ledge...

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Compiled by GARY HOPKINS

SERIAL "L" TWO EPISODES BLACK AND WHITE

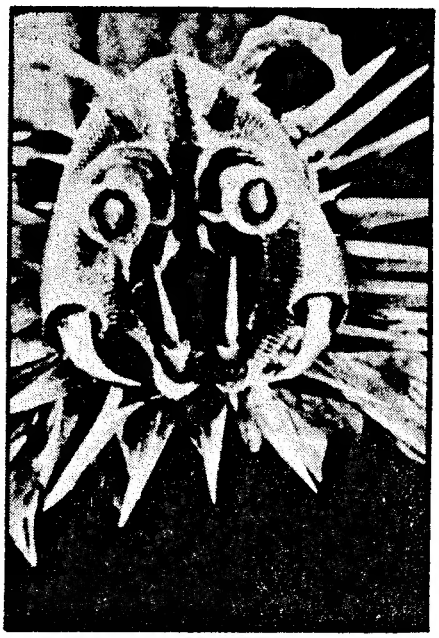
"THE POWERFUL ENEMY" - 2nd. January 1965
"DESPERATE MEASURES" - 9th. January 1965

CAST

DOCTOR WHO.....WILLIAM HARTNELL
IAN CHESTERTON.....WILLIAM RUSSELL
BARBARA WRIGHT.....JACQUELINE HILL
VICKI.....MAUREEN O'BRIEN

BENNETT.....RAY BARRETT
SPACE CAPTAIN/SAND MONSTER.TOM SHERIDAN
KOQUILLION.....SYDNEY WILSON*
DIDONIANS.....JOHN STUART
COLIN HUGHES

* See Technical Observations ('11-09')



CREW

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....DAVID MALONEY
ASSISTANT FLOOR MANAGER.VALERIE WILKINS
COSTUME SUPERVISOR.....DAPHNE DARE
MAKE-UP SUPERVISOR.....SONIA MARKHAM
INCIDENTAL MUSIC.....TRISTRAM CARY
STORY EDITOR.....DENNIS SPOONER
DESIGNER.....RAYMOND P. CUSICK
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER.....MERVYN PINFIELD
PRODUCER.....VERITY LAMBERT
DIRECTOR.....CHRISTOPHER BARRY

"'The Rescue' was already done when I took over, but then I had to do a big rewrite, as David (Whitaker) had vastly over-written it. It was a two-part story, and he'd written about two hours worth per episode! It was the only story I ever worked on that the whole cast refused to play as it was written..."

DENNIS SPOONER